

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO WHITE HOUSE

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WHITE HOUSE PASS SECRETARY SHULTZ' PARTY ABOARD SAM 86972

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: US-SOVIET DINNER SEPTEMBER 24 IN NEW YORK

1. SECRETARY HOSTED DINNER SEPTEMBER 24 FOR SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO. DOBRYNIN AND SUKHODREV ACCOMPANIED GROMYKO; SONNENFELDT AND STOESSEL PRESENT ON US SIDE. MAJOR PART OF CONVERSATION DURING DINNER CONCERNED QUESTIONS RELATED TO MFN LEGISLATION AND OPPOSITION IN US TO US-SOVIET DETENTE. FOLLOWING DINNER SECRETARY AND GROMYKO TALKED ALONE FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF HOUR.

2. SECRETARY NOTED COMBINATION OF FORCES BUILT UP IN US AGAINST US-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP. THIS WAS UNUSUAL SITUATION INVOLVING ALLIANCE OF LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES AND HE DOUBTED IT WOULD LAST. IN ANY EVENT, SECRETARY STRESSED THAT WE WILL NOT CHANGE OUR POLICY OF SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION. SECRETARY NOTED HE WOULD MAKE PUBLIC SPEECH IN WASHINGTON OCTOBER 8 AND WOULD TAKE OCCASION TO SPEAK OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS IN POSITIVE SENSE. GROMYKO SAID SOVIETS ARE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND

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SITUATION IN US, ALTHOUGH THIS IS DIFFICULT -- PARTICULARLY FROM MOSCOW STANDPOINT.

3. GROMYKO CONTINUED THAT THEY ARE AMAZED BY PUBLIC OUTCRY IN THIS COUNTRY RAISED BY PEOPLE WHO WISH TO INTERVENE IN SOVIET AFFAIRS. SOVIETS CAN ANSWER IN SIMILAR WAY, BUT SO FAR HAVE SHOWN RESTRAINT. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR STAND TAKEN BY PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY AND NOTED THAT THEIR WORDS AND ACTIONS COINCIDED.

4. SECRETARY SAID PRESENT OUTCRY WOULD NOT AFFECT OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND WE WILL MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO MOBILIZE ALL AVAILABLE POSSIBILITIES TO ENSURE THAT WE CAN HONOR OBLIGATIONS WHICH WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH USSR.

5. GROMYKO SPOKE AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT SOVIET ACTION IN NOT IMPOSING EXIT TAX AND FELT THIS STEP, COUPLED WITH OFFICIAL ASSURANCES ON THIS GIVEN BY SOVIET LEADERSHIP, WAS INSUFFICIENTLY APPRECIATED BY US CRITICS. SOME OF LATTER CALLED FOR COMPLETE ABOLITION OF EXIT TAX DECREE, FAILING TO UNDERSTAND THAT, EVEN IF RESCINDED, SOVIETS COULD REIMPOSE TAX. GROMYKO ALSO SAID SOME PEOPLE IN US SEEM TO THINK THAT SOVIETS ARE BEGGING FOR ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE AND THAT IF THIS IS NOT ACHIEVED "SKY WILL FALL" OVER SOVIET UNION. AS GENERAL SECRETARY HAD MADE CLEAR, SOVIETS ARE NOT BEGGING FROM US BUT SEE RELATIONSHIP AS BEING ON MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS BASIS. THEY FEEL THAT ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGES SHOULD TAKE PLACE TO BUTTRESS UNDERSTANDINGS IN FOREIGN POLICY FIELD. SECRETARY AGREED AND COMMENTED THAT, AS STUDENT OF HISTORY, HE KNEW THAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE GONE THROUGH WHAT SOVIETS HAVE IN RESISTING FOREIGN PRESSURES ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY AMOUNT OF TRADE INVOLVED BETWEEN US AND USSR.

6. SECRETARY SAID THAT WE ARE NOW CONFRONTED WITH DIFFICULT SITUATION IN US WHICH WAS UNFORESEEN AT TIME AGREEMENTS WERE MADE WITH SOVIET UNION IN 1972. HE REMARKED THAT, SO FAR AS SOVIET DOMESTIC LEGISLATION IS CONCERNED, ANY CHANGES THEY MIGHT CONTEMPLATE IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS COULD BE OF HELP, BUT WE HAVE NOTHING SPECIFIC TO SUGGEST. WHATEVER SOVIETS DID, WE WOULD PURSUE OUR COURSE AND WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO IMPLEMENT AGREEMENTS REACHED.

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7. SECRETARY EXPLAINED COMPLICATED PARLIAMENTARY SITUATION REGARDING MFN LEGISLATION AND OUTLINED CURRENT THINKING AS TO MEANS TO COPE WITH IT. WE HOPE COMPROMISE CAN BE WORKED OUT BUT THIS MAY TAKE SOME TIME. SOVIETS INDICATED THAT, EVEN IF MFN LEGISLATION IS NOT FEASIBLE, THEY ARE MOST INTERESTED IN PRESERVING FLEXIBILITY RE EXIM CREDIT FACILITIES. KISSINGER

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